

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND EDUCATION (OE) WORKING GROUP
Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary Office
Scituate, MA
10:00am to 4:30pm
25 March 2004

MEETING SUMMARY

ACTION: Upcoming meetings

April 7, 2004

May 14, 2004

ACTION: Corrections to affiliation of members in Feb.11 summary

Corrections will be made to the affiliation column in the attendee list for several members, in the February 11, 2004 Meeting Summary.

ACTION: Research possible promotional material focusing on children

Jack Crowley will look into working with a children's story writer and/or artist.

ACTION: User group matrix

A user group matrix will be distributed to all OE Working Group members. Matrices will be completed and returned to Anne Smrcina (anne.smrcina@noaa.gov) and Karen Fox (karen.fox@ps.net) by April 2, 2004. The matrices will be compiled, then reviewed at the April 7th meeting.

SAMPLE: USER GROUP MATRIX

(From March 25, 2004 Working Group Meeting)

Group Characteristics / Usage	Whale Watch Boats (Includes Naturalists, Passengers, Captain)
	81%
Objectives (Goals)	Increase awareness. Reduce the impacts of whale watching on the Sanctuary.
Strategy	Improve connection to whale watching boats.
Tactics	Training of naturalists. Up-to-date Research information.
Media	Direct list (email).
Evaluation Results	

USER GROUP MATRIX

Group Characteristics / Usage	Whale Watch Boats	Recreational Boaters	Commercial Fishermen	Large Vessels	Divers	Science Research
	81%	34%	21%	18%	17%	11%
Objectives (Goals)						
Strategy						
Tactics						
Media						
Evaluation Results						

USER GROUP MATRIX (CONTINUED)

Group Characteristics / Usage	Education Community (K-12)	Partners	Government Agencies	Media	Decision Makers	Influencers
Objectives (Goals)						
Strategy						
Tactics						
Media						
Evaluation Results						

Working Group Attendees (March 25, 2004)

Name	WG Seat / Affiliation	Attendance
Richard Wheeler, Chair	CCMNH, Ed WG Chair	Present
Anne Smrcina, Staff Lead	SBNMS, Ed WG Team Lead	Present
William Spitzer	NEAq – V.P. Exhibits/Programs	Present
Tony LaCasse	NEAq – Media Relations Manager	
Maureen McConnell	Museum of Science – Exhibit Planner	Present
Andrea Thorrold	COSEE Coordinator – Woods Hole	Present
Jack Crowley	MME / UMass Dart. / New Bedford Oceanarium	Present
Nicola Micozzi	Science Supervisor – Plymouth Public Schools	Present
Tracy Hart	Marine Exc. Assoc. – Maine Sea Grant	Present
Jennifer McCann	URI Coastal Research Ctr. / RI Sea Grant	Present
Lou Gainor	Capt. Nautical Talk – WATD Radio	Present
Tom Clark	Principal – Stratagia	Present
Charles Rasak	Creative Director – Creative Resources Group	
Wendy Northcross	Exec. Dir – Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce	
Kristen McMenamy	Marketing Manager	
Jennifer Ferguson-Mitchell	Public Affairs Deputy Dir. – IFAW	Present
Christopher Bailey	IFAW	
Sue Moynihan	Dir. of Int.&Cult.Res.Mgmt. – CC Natl Seashore	Present
Lt. Dean Jones	Public Affairs Officer – US Coast Guard, Dist.1	
Amy Thomas	US Coast Guard, Dist.1	Present
Jay Michaud	Fisherman / Mar. Surv / MA Lobstermans Assoc.	
Cynde Bierman	Sr. Naturalist – Ocean All. / Cp. Ann Whale Watch	
Bill Fairbanks	Pres. Hbr. Moor. Serv. / MA Marine Trades Assoc.	Present
Technical Advisors		
Beth Daley	Boston Globe	

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, ADOPTION OF AGENDA, AND ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Anne Smrcina opened the meeting and gave an overview of the meeting agenda. Introductions were made by all attendees. New participants to the group are Tom Clarke, Principal, Stratagia, with a background in marketing, Jennifer Ferguson-Mitchell, Public Affairs Deputy Director, IFAW, and Bill Fairbanks, President of the Harbor Mooring Service / Marine Trades Association.

The meeting summary (minutes) of the February 11, 2004 were accepted, however several modifications will be made to the affiliation column of the attendee list.

PRESENTATION – THE CAPE COD NATIONAL SEASHORE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Sue Moynihan, Director of Int. and Cult. Resource Management, Cape Cod National Seashore

The Cape Cod National Seashore Management Plan took two years to develop and is a five to seven year Plan; it has served as a guide from 2002 and will continue to be used for the next several years. It was a very difficult process, but very collaborative and the Plan is being used; it is referred to all the time. With limited resources, there are some difficult decisions to make in developing a Management Plan. The audience needs to be determined, and park themes identified.

The Seashore is located within six towns on Cape Cod (Provincetown, Truro, Wellfleet, Eastham, Orleans and Chatham). Generally, the constituency is the broad American public and covers many interest groups, but the towns are critical with each having a very distinct personality. Buy-in is a big part of a successful plan. Determination of a constituency should be far reaching, and constituents must be included in the planning process.

To develop the National Seashore Plan, the first step was to identify the most important audiences. It was recognized that the Cape is inundated by people in July and August. The summer tourists are a very big audience, and they have an impact so they can't be ignored. But the local school groups, park neighbors and others who live around the Seashore year round are the most critical audience. (These individuals, for example, have a personal stake in issues such as septic systems.) The summer audience had previously been getting much of the attention, but the planning group made a conscious decision to shift much of that attention to the local constituency. The decision making process became more issues-based; these issues are still effected by the summer crowd, but the planning process needed to primarily include the local communities.

Participants in the process are opinion leaders who tend to show up every week. It is relatively effective, as they talk about the issues with their neighbors. For example, there is recently much talk generated from the press about public dollars that tend to cast a negative light on the park service. But the plan has become very valuable, as it has kept the group grounded. The summer program is the most diverse (visitors want a wide range). It is fairly easy to interpret what the local constituents and/or Friends Groups are looking for, as they are very specific about their needs.

Once the key audiences have been identified, specific action items can be determined. For example, an action might be the development of a plan for keeping the website maintained. This helps to prioritize the issues and stay focused. It is also reasonable to make a conscious decision to move an action item from one year to the next. At the end of 2003, the Seashore group went through the action items for the past year and evaluated what had, and had not been done. Some results were disappointing and others were not; some items were moved or dropped and new items were developed. It was an opportunity to re-evaluate priorities.

The Cape Cod National Seashore Management Plan has a framework for development of a partnership with Stellwagen. The group is interested in determining how it might include the Sanctuary in its overall theme.

The Seashore's Plan has been somewhat effective in helping with park issues, but is not tied to the budget. It is not generally used to acquire funding.

Discussion: Evaluation

With regard to tracking visitors, there has not really been any formal attempt to track visitors and keep in touch with them. Sign-in sheets are used, but they primarily generate the volunteer staff. There are Friend's Groups who raise money, fund preservation projects and are an extension of the volunteer staff (Friends of the Cape Cod National Seashore).

The Seashore Plan is primarily not outcome based; that is, linked to evaluation or modifying behavior. There really is no practical way to determine the number of people that were "converted" to Park supporters. Constituents in education have been asked to help identify their needs. In most cases, the priority is that it be linked to the curriculum.

Stellwagen has found that testing can be extremely costly, often more than the program itself. So without an increased budget, only simple evaluations can be implemented.

The Rhode Island Sea Grant has used “outcome mapping.” It is a time consuming process, but not too costly. It involves targeting the market/client, identifying what you would like to see, what you expect to see, and what you would love to see. It has been somewhat useful.

The Maine Sea Grant has used graduate students for evaluation projects. It is very low cost, and has been very effective.

PRESENTATION – THE ABC’S OF GETTING YOUR MESSAGE OUT THERE

Beth Daley, Reporter with the Boston Globe

Name recognition is a very big issue, and Stellwagen needs something to brand it, such as a logo. Typically when something occurs in Stellwagen, the location is identified as the Gulf of Maine or Cape Cod Bay, but not “Stellwagen.”

The ABCs of getting publicity:

A – Ad Campaigns. Get your message out in weekly papers, guides to the area and free handouts.

B – Business pages of newspapers are a great place to get coverage. Newspapers are all devoting more time and space to business stories, so think about business and economic stories that touch on the goals of Stellwagen (e.g., eco-tourism, skydiving,...).

C – Columns are good, as long as they are no longer than 600 to 700 words. Weeklies love columns, especially if they are written by local citizens. It almost doesn’t matter what it is, just get the name in the local papers.

D – Deadlines. Know your local newspaper’s deadlines so you can call reporters when they are not so busy. It’s great to get the weekly newspaper your press release a day or two in advance of its deadline. It’s a cardinal sin to pitch a story to a reporter when they are on a deadline. Find out when they want their information.

E – The economy. Reporters and editors are compelled by any story that has an economic, dollars-and-cents perspective. Don’t ignore this even if it sparks controversy. Better to get your message out first before an angry group calls a newspaper, rather than after the fact.

F – Follow-Up. Don’t be shy about making follow-up calls to reporters and assignment editors. Press advisories always require follow-up calls, especially to TV stations that always lose press advisories. Fax the press advisory the day before an event and then fax it again the day of the event. Both advisories should be accompanied with phone calls. Reporters are very busy, so be persistent.

G – Green up. Think about how this can get a message out about how this is good for the environment. Provide eco-tourism activities and stats on other places that did the same thing with good results.

H – Humor. Fish may be disappearing, but don’t let it get the better of you.

I – Icebergs. Follow the iceberg or pyramid formula in writing a press release. Put the important items – who, what, where and when – in the first or second paragraph and explain why it is important in the third paragraph. When articles are cut, it is typically from the bottom.

J – Junkets. Las Vegas may be out of the question, but you could take your local officials out on the water for a day. Stellwagen is a great place for compelling items such as research discoveries.

K – Kids are great! An example might be Stellwagen Bank School Days focused on scientific studies. These are great activities that will educate and garner publicity at the same time.

L – Lightness. Not every story has to be serious. For example, the public loves personifications of animals.

M – Menhaden and Minke whales. What better way to explain the importance of Stellwagen than to talk about how your plans will affect the Sanctuary's animal life. And know the message that needs to be conveyed, and make it a catchy phrase.

N – News. Realize what it is. Appointments of new board members may be important internally, but the public wants to sink their teeth into issues. Also, dollar amounts are not news. However, the way the money will be spent and how this affects something people care about is news.

O – Opportunity knocks by using email lists, or better, list serves for getting the word out. Sign-up sheets should always be available for getting names and email addresses of supporters. List serves are an easy way to communicate with those supporters in seconds.

P – Get to know the Photographers. If you see a photographer covering one of your events, get his or her name, a card and a phone number. When photos are taken in Stellwagen, make sure the papers say "Stellwagen" rather than something more vague. If not, call the paper afterward to ensure it will be mentioned the next time.

Q – Use language that is simple and concise. Do not use techie talk that smacks of quantum physics!

R – Rehearse your story pitch. If you're calling a reporter with a story idea, rehearse what you plan to say so that your message is quick and concise.

S – Spelling words correctly is critically important. If your press release has misspelled words, reporters will throw it away because you no longer have credibility.

T – Timing. If it can happen, peg your story to some other larger event going on in the world. For example, a story on a saved humpback whale the day before they start naming them will generate more interest.

U – (Nothing for U)

V – Visuals are critical in pitching any story, especially for TV stations. Getting kids in the story is always a winner.

W – Win wins are achieved when you identify ways to work together as partners. A consistent look and feel among the players for your message will help keep people reminded of your goal. This can be a powerful team approach to any multi-layered marketing campaign.

X – Extreme makeovers may be the best thing for your publicity piece. Dust off those old examples and put on a new face to your message. Simplicity is the key; link it to saving time, health and money any way you can. For example, a billboard in Ottawa says “Take Two for Congestion” where the visual is two busses in the palm of a hand of a doctor. The message to ride the bus couldn’t be more clear and motivating.

Y – Yipee, you are almost there! Keep the momentum by thinking of new and creative ways to sell your message on a continuous basis across all modes of communication.

Z – Do everything with zeal. Find ways to make connections with everyone you encounter. If you’re fired up, enthusiastic and have a “can do” attitude, others will be motivated to act, too. And remember: H is for Humor!

Discussion

Stellwagen has internal issues with devising an identification (logo). The Sanctuaries program has a whale’s tail logo, and NOAA would actually prefer that their logo be used. The terms are, the Whale’s Tail logo and the NOAA logo must be used, but the Dept. of Commerce logo is not mandatory. They very much frown on the individual sanctuaries devising their own logo. However an internal logo, such as for a kids program, would be completely appropriate (e.g. the Stellwageneers).

If a new logo/message is devised, a humpback logo with “Stellwagen is Uplifting” may be very effective. It has multiple meanings, and would be easy to remember. But politically there is a boundary. At this time, it may be most important to make people aware of the “bank” itself, which is an underwater plateau, and help the public to understand the definition of a sanctuary.

It would be very beneficial to find support from a group or organization that already has high visibility. The Patriots are actually interested in the environment these days, as a result of issues related to development of the new stadium. All that is needed to begin is a link such as a common interest.

People need a way to visualize Stellwagen. A story such as “The Ridges and Mountains of Stellwagen Bank” might help people to better understand it. A difficulty is that the Sanctuary doesn’t affect most people’s lives, but there are some very interesting things about it. Probably the most compelling are shipwrecks. Stellwagen does not contain the greatest number of shipwrecks, but they are better preserved than in many other places because they are protected by the unique geology. Any compelling item, such as a letter written by the Captain of a shipwreck especially at the time of an event, is always intriguing.

The 150th anniversary for the discovery of Stellwagen Bank is coming up. Maybe this can be used for promotion. But there needs to be a clear understanding of why Stellwagen should be promoted. Part of Stellwagen’s mandate is that protection is the primary goal. This message should be conveyed in about three words.

The banks affect the fishing community more directly than any other group. And the fact that it can get very crowded with fishermen around the edges of the banks, staking out their fishing territory with buoys, could actually be a page one story if presented correctly. But the best way to get the word out is to make it part of a bigger story. And tell it with a slant to please the audience.

A very interesting item could be the “underwater weather” occurring in the banks; there is always movement.

The story might possibly be that there are competing uses out there. The promotion might be the idea that there is a need to accommodate all of the varying interests. Stellwagen has the legislative mandate to

implement more regulation than currently exists. However, regulation requires time consuming processes, such as environmental assessments. Part of the Management Plan might be recommending new regulation.

HANDOUTS

- Outline for Development of an Action Plan
- “Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Management Plan: Education and Outreach Section”
- “Cruise Ship Discharges Action Plan: Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary”

ACTION PLAN REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

At the last meeting, the specific user groups were discussed. Once these groups are identified, the necessary steps to address group issues can be determined. It will be important to understand what type of information each group trusts and what gets their attention.

Stellwagen’s land-based constituency runs from Provincetown to Gloucester, so it is difficult to identify constituents. How do we send out our messages, and who do we work with? It has been established that whale watching boats are an important constituent. And there are 94 cruise ships scheduled to pass through the Sanctuary this year. Some of the cruises are providing passengers with information, but these are one time users.

The Outreach and Education group is meant to develop approaches for the other groups to use, to get their messages to the user communities. For example, if the Marine Mammal Entanglement Working Group has developed a specific message for the fishing community, the OE group will help them to determine the best way to communicate that message.

GOAL STATEMENT REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

At the February 11, 2004 meeting, the draft goal statement was determined to be:

“To develop a set of action plans to enhance public awareness and understanding of the Sanctuary and its resources, and encourage responsible stewardship.”

A rewrite of the goal statement on March 25, 2004 was determined to be:

“To encourage responsible stewardship of our natural and cultural resources of Stellwagen Bank and to build a constituency.”

The group will wordsmith this draft, and ensure that it meets the needs of the national program. The goal will be the group’s philosophy and/or overarching purpose. Strategies will be developed to meet this goal.

Two important messages for the goal statement are:

1. Protect Natural & Cultural Resources
2. Encourage Awareness

Cultural resources are primarily defined as “things on the bottom,” such as human habitation sites and shipwrecks. According to NEPA, “natural” and “cultural” are treated on an equal plane.

It may be difficult to measure “public awareness” in, and of itself, without measuring the outcome of public awareness. For specific user groups, there is more of an outcome with some sort of direct effect. But with others (and/or the general public), it could simply be “public awareness.” One of the goals should actually be conveying information about species of the Northeast (Gulf of Maine), as there currently is limited information about this. Also consider that there are 186,000 boats registered in Massachusetts. And the recreational boater is a relatively untapped user group.

It may not be possible to convey all of the details about the Sanctuary, but it's possible to convey the importance of it. Compare this to national parks; not many people know all the details, but they know that they are important.

USER GROUPS / MARKETING DISCUSSION

With regard to media, Stellwagen’s website is currently undergoing complete redesign, and the effort is being assisted by National. There is a template that all the Sanctuaries are to use, but there is plenty of room to work within it. Also, it was suggested that marine weather broadcasting be researched as a venue.

It has been suggested that market research be conducted to confirm who is using the Sanctuary. And, media should be the last step once all the facts are collected. Determine an overriding mission so that the group does not drift. Regarding brochures, often these die the minute they are published because they are caught in time. Regarding the web, this is a good platform but will not reach out to all groups (many people don’t use the internet). And, the message needs to be personal (whales fit this description). The key is to develop databases, and leverage partners anywhere they can be leveraged. With regard to branding, a logo should not be the top priority; rather, the message is what’s important.

A user group matrix was set up, to help further understand the audience (see Action Items). This will also help to understand where there may be gaps. The process should result in a list of user groups, and messages for each.

There needs to be a distinction between providing information (e.g., regulations) and providing public awareness regarding the importance of the Sanctuary. A list of priorities would help to stay focused as there are limited resources. It might be effective to determine the group with the greatest impact, and work primarily with them to get the most done without wasting resources.

How do you reach (educate) those that have the most impact? People will not volunteer to be educated. It is possible to tie outreach and education to the State Licensing Board, but this would be very time consuming and costly. The insurance companies are a possible avenue rather than the state. The Marine Trades Association is an arm that Stellwagen has used to help carry the message (e.g., signs posted near fuel pumps and boat ramps). But very often the strategy has been scattershot because there are so many groups and messages to carry out. Once buy-in has occurred with the various user groups, education will be much easier. But there is so much information coming out of NOAA, it is really difficult to sort out.

Once priorities have been identified, actions can be determined. Research has been done (e.g., the effects of the speed of boats on the number of whale hits) and is available through other groups. The research

will support the need for regulatory actions. There is an infrastructure group that will take OE findings, and look at the overall Management Plan to determine how all the pieces fit.

Tasks do not need to be exclusive. One task can contribute to fulfilling other tasks. For example, name recognition can be helped by naming the photographs on the website in a way that causes the title to be downloaded with the picture.

When developing strategies, keep in mind that certain tactics can alienate people who could potentially be advocates. They could also make strategies fail. For example, if the captain of a whale watching boat is not included in the decision making process for a new regulation, it could have negative impacts.

FINAL COMMENTS

User group matrices will be distributed to Working Group members, and will be completed and returned to Anne Smrcina and Karen Fox. The matrices will be compiled and reviewed at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30pm.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
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National Marine Sanctuary System
Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary
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Outreach and Education Working Group

AGENDA

25 March 2004

10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

SBNMS Headquarters

Scituate, MA

- 10:00 – 10:15 Welcome, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of Minutes
Richard Wheeler, CCMNH and Ed WG Chair
Anne Smrcina, SBNMS, Ed WG Team Lead
- 10:15 – 10:30 Introduction of New Participants
- 10:30 – 11:00 Presentation on Today's Media: -- Beth Daley, Boston Globe
- 11:00 – 11:30 Presentation on Park Service Planning: Sue Moynihan, Cape Cod National Seashore
- 12:00 -- 1:00 *Working Lunch -- A review of other sanctuary action plans*
Anne Smrcina
- 1:00 -- 1:30 Finalize Goal Statement
- 1:30 -- 3:45 Discussion of scoping comments and importance to SBNMS management plan
low name recognition,
better information dissemination,
leveraged partnerships,
curriculum development
Develop strategies and outcomes to meet O&E goal
- 3:45 – 4:00 W.G. Logistics (Meeting Dates, Technical Advisors), Next Steps and Summary
- 4:00 Adjourn